



*Manatee County, Florida
Board of County Commissioners
Administrative Procedures Manual*

Procedure #:	Title:	Date Issued:
402.001	Cellular Phones/Wireless Communications	05/06/2008

PURPOSE:

In order to conduct County business in a timely and safe manner, it may be necessary for employees to make use of wireless communications devices, such as a cellular phone. An employee so situated may be provided with a cell phone allowance to compensate for the County business uses of his/her personal cell phone. In some cases, as describe below, an employee may be issued a County-purchased or leased cell phone to conduct County business. The purpose of these procedures is to establish consistent and clear rules for the issuance and/or use of County or personal mobile communication devices, including cellular phones, for County business, and payment of costs related thereto.

PROCEDURE:

1. Allowance for personally owned cell phone or wireless communication device:

Employees certified by their department director as being required to utilize cell phones or more advanced wireless communications devices, such as "smart phones" for the efficient performance of their job functions, and who meet such requirement by use of a personally owned device, may be authorized to be paid a cell phone allowance. The allowance permits employees to make use of their personally-owned devices for both County business and personal needs, thus negating the need to carry multiple devices and the cost to the County to procure phones and manage/monitor accounts. Request for authorization for an allowance will be made through the employee's director and must be approved by the County Administrator (County Attorney for employees of that Office). Employees receiving an allowance will be required to carry their devices during their assigned work hours, and accept all County business calls and, in the case of smart phones, e mails, on their devices. These employees must consent to have their phone number listed in departmental and/or County directories as needed so that they may be reached by the County during their work day, and may also list this number on County business cards, where appropriate.

The cell phone allowance will permit the employee to establish his/her own account with a service provider of his/her choice which will satisfy both County business needs as well as personal use needs. There are three cell phone allowance rates. Based on the County's analysis of historic use, most employees will be provided the Basic Voice rate, which is intended to cover average daily use. Employees certified by their director as having to make extensive and regular use of their phones for County business calls which would result in extensive use of minutes may qualify for the Secondary Voice rate. Most providers offer unlimited minute plans and employees are encouraged to acquire such plans as they will usually make the most financial sense where a phone is used for combined business and personal needs. A Voice/Data rate will cover those limited number of employees whose duties require not only voice calling capability but wireless access to e mail and internet. Reimbursement rates are established as follows:

- Basic voice allowance: **\$15.23**/pay period
- Secondary voice allowance: **\$22.83**/pay period
- Voice/data allowance: **\$37.50**/pay period

A selected plan must provide the employee with the features or services required under the applicable allowance, and the County will not be a party to such account and will not owe the employee any funds over and above the allowance rate established. Allowances will be paid to employees via regular pay check and are subject to applicable payroll taxes. The need for the secondary or voice/data rate must be demonstrated to the department director, and approved by the County Administrator (County Attorney for employees of that Office).

2. Purchase of county-issued cellular phones:

If an employee so desires, he/she may purchase currently-issued County-owned/leased phone equipment as is for **\$1.00**. Upon such sale, the County account for that number will need to be closed, and the telephone number assigned to the cell phone may be transferred to the employee's personally-administered account obtained from the service provider. This transfer will be the employee's responsibility. Employees receiving an allowance are required to properly manage their accounts; including paying invoices from providers on a timely basis so as not to cause the service to become discontinued. Employees who are receiving an allowance must, within five (5) business days, report to his or her director (County Attorney for employees of that Office) of any loss or interruption of the employee's account. For any periods where the employee fails to maintain the wireless communications capabilities being covered by an allowance, the payment of the allowance shall be suspended and funds already paid during such periods must be reimbursed to the County by the employee in question. Once the employee re-establishes his/her account, the allowance will resume being paid.

3. Authorization for Employee to Receive Cell Phone Allowance:

A department wishing to add an employee to the cell phone allowance program must have appropriate authorization and approvals. Initial authorization is by the director, with final approval by the County Administrator or designee.

- Departments will forward an approved request memorandum from the director's office to the County Administrator petitioning for the addition of a cellular telephone allowance.
- The approval request memorandum, with the County Administrator's endorsement, will be forwarded from the Administrator's office to the Information Services Department coordinator. Denied requests will be returned to the requesting department.
- For employees of the County Attorney's Office, the County Attorney may directly authorize an allowance, which shall also be forwarded to ISD for processing.
- Approvals will be logged by ISD and forwarded to the requesting department and the Clerk's Finance Department. Once the approval is delivered to Finance, reimbursement may commence.

4. Exceptions to Cell Phone Allowance Requirement:

As noted, a cost savings and ease of administration is realized by the County where employees utilize personally-owned wireless devices/accounts to perform required wireless duties. Therefore, County-owned/leased/issued devices will be the exception and will only be provided where the unique circumstances of the position require a County-issued phone. Exceptions include:

- Job duties requiring 24-hour availability, i.e. essential versus non-essential personnel, e.g.,

ECC, EOC, EMS, Chief and Captains, certain administrative job functions.

- Documented inability to obtain standard cellular account, such as due to bad credit.
- Cellular phones not issued to an individual but rather to a department or division to be used as a shared resource and not an actual person.

5. One Way Text Message Cell Phone Allowance:

Employees who receive a cell phone allowance may elect to receive one-way text messages on their personal cell phone, with Department Director approval in lieu of carrying a County pager. This is optional and no additional allowance will be given. Employees who do not currently receive a cell phone allowance may receive a one way text messaging allowance, if approved by the Department Director, in lieu of carrying a County pager.

- One way text messaging allowance rate is **\$4.00**/pay period.

Allowances will be paid to employees via regular pay check and are subject to applicable payroll taxes.

6. County Purchased Cell Phones

A. Authorization for New or Additional Subscription:

Departments wishing to add a new County-issued cellular telephone or an additional subscription are required to have appropriate *authorization* and *approvals*. The authorization process begins with the department Director with final approval by the County Administrator (County Attorney for employees of that Office).

1. Departments will forward an approval request memorandum from the director's office to the County Administrator petitioning for the addition of a cellular telephone line to the existing departmental account. The approval request memorandum must contain the following information:
 - Number of lines being requested for approval
 - Justification statement for additional line(s)
 - Cellular service provider and service plan
 - Allowance exception reason
2. The approval request memorandum with the County Administrator's endorsement will be forwarded from the Administrator's Office to the Information Services Department coordinator. Memorandums not approved will be returned to the department.
3. Approvals will be logged and forwarded to the requesting department with a service provider and type of service, unless a specific service provider and type of service has been requested as part of the request for approval. A copy of the approval and service information will also be sent to the Clerk's Finance Department.
4. Reactivation of a cellular telephone line previously authorized does not require an approval request memorandum if the reactivation is within six (6) months of the deactivation. Reactivations within this time are a departmental decision. Department coordinators will notify ISD and Finance of reactivations and cancellations.

B. Purchase Methods:

Only a Direct Expenditure Voucher (DEV) or Purchase Order (PO) may be used to order new cellular telephone service. Purchase cards are not to be used. Approved requests will be forwarded to departmental cellular telephone coordinators along with a properly authorized DEV or PO. The DEV or PO maybe forwarded to the government sales cellular service provider's representative.

Information given to the government sales representative in activating an account should include the department name, user name (person to whom telephone will be assigned), and the correct address for forwarding of monthly billing statements. The address for payment of County bills and invoices is:

Clerk of the Circuit Court
Manatee County Finance Department
P.O. Box 1000
Bradenton,
FL 34206-1000

C. County-Issued Phones: Account/Device Management

Issues related to County phones may include:

- *Account issues* include billing, service plan discrepancies, new orders, changes and termination of service.
- *Equipment issues* include change out of equipment including replacement, equipment upgrade, warranty issues, defects and ancillary equipment.
- *Service issues* are more technical network issues including custom calling features, such as voicemail, caller ID, etc. This includes turning custom calling features on or off. Service issues can include quality of service.

Users with issues as to any of these should address them to their department's PC Coordinator, who will work with ISD on the issue.

ORIGINATOR, TITLE, AND DEPARTMENT NAME:

Diane Frenz, Director, Information Services

AUTHORIZATION:

Ed Hunzeker, County Administrator

HISTORY:

Modification of Title:
Amended: (date)

FORMS:

Forms for cell phone approvals are on the INET under "Forms" tab, Information Services page.

RELATED POLICY:

D.2 Wireless Communications Devices Policy.pdf

DATE ISSUED/SUNSET DATE:

Issue Date: May 6, 2008

Sunset Date: May 6, 2013